

*IN MEMORIAM:
ELLEN P. REESE
1926-1997*

JUDITH E. FAVELL

MOUNT DORA, FLORIDA

Her presence was always felt. With her spare, straight frame and handsome face (usually bracketed by brightly colored animal earrings), she was never intentionally obtrusive but nevertheless was unfailingly noticed. At conventions and other events, both the budding and the blossomed alike would point her out, greeting her with affection and respect. She deserved such regard.

Ellie's career was spent at Mount Holyoke College, beginning with her undergraduate education and commemorated 50 years later with the dedication of the Ellen and Thomas Reese Psychology and Education Building. During these years, Ellie was recognized for her contribution to generations of Mount Holyoke students, awarded for example, the Norma Cutts Dafoe Professorship in Psychology. Her extraordinary accomplishments as a teacher were acknowledged beyond Mount Holyoke as well. In 1986 the American Psychological Association (APA) bestowed upon Ellie the award for Distinguished Contribution to Education in Psychology, one of APA's highest honors. Her stature as a teacher, scholar, researcher and as a woman of achievement was further celebrated with her 1992 inclusion in APA's Centennial Women's Heritage Exhibit, honoring 100 women for contributions throughout the history of psychology.

In addition to her honors, Ellie's elected offices reflect the esteem with which she was held within behavior analysis, psychology, and education. She served as President of APA's Division of the Experimental Analysis of Behavior, Director of the Berkshire As-



Ellen Reese at the dedication of the Psychology and Education building to Ellen and Thomas Reese, May 1994. Photo by Tom Jacobs.

sociation for Behavior Analysis and Therapy, Trustee of the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies, and President of the Association for Behavior Analysis International.

Ellie's honors and offices were reflective of her important and prodigious work: films such as the series "Behavior Theory in Practice" and books such as *The Analysis of Human Operant Behavior* and *Experiments*

in *Operant Behavior*, which reached hundreds of thousands, scores of scholarly articles and addresses, numerous applied workshops and, perhaps best of all, hundreds of carefully nurtured and rigorously trained students.

Her presence has indeed been felt, as a professional, a lover of animals, a teacher, a woman, and a friend. Her films, texts, manuals, and workshops represent the best in teaching principles of behavior, from their basic dimensions to their operation in everyday lives. Her demonstrations of conditioning across species, settings, and circumstances remain among the most inspiring and essential lessons on the power of these principles. She devoted her career to teaching these foundations from which all behavior-analytic work emanated, and shared concerns when these roots were disregarded or minimized.

In teaching these lessons, animals were her professional colleagues and personal friends. Her respect and love of animals were evident in every facet of her career and life, and fortunately generalized to other living beings as well (though canines kept a slight edge). She, Barbara Etzel, and I delighted in sharing stories of our two- and four-legged friends, one favorite being the superiority of porpoise trainers as teachers of individuals with learning challenges.

Amidst all of her endeavors and all of her

facets, Ellie was at her core a teacher. Whether through films, writings, presentations, or discussions shared over good wine, Ellie taught us. She taught us principles and applications. Most basic of all, she taught us the fundamental credo that the organism, the student, is always right (with Mount Holyoke students having a slight edge) and that all will successfully learn if we learn from them as we craft our methods. The many students who benefited directly from Ellie's wise and sensitive teaching reflect this philosophy, but the rest of us have surely been the beneficiaries of her teaching as well.

And Ellie loved and was loved by her family and friends. With us she shared her protean interests in areas as diverse as art, wine, travel, and animal breeding and training, while encouraging and appreciating the tastes and talents of others. She was warm, responsive, and fully absorbed in her relationships, yet her devotion to her friends coexisted with her steadfast independence, love of her spaces, and ease in her own company.

Ellie will be missed beyond measure, but her legacy will endure through the people, programs, and principles she supported throughout her life. We honor her for her contributions to behavior analysis and psychology, thank her for the lessons she taught us, and are grateful for her presence in our lives.